A STORY INTERNALIZED: 1900-1950
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A STORY INTERNALIZED: 1900-1950

Betsy Hearne

From eighteenth-century courtiers to Cocteau, from Freudians to prime-time TV, "Beauty and the Beast" has captured the artistic and popular imagination. Nineteenth-century versions, affected by innovations in book production and printing, combined lavish illustrations with moral instruction, a greater divergence in narrative voice, and a heightened intention to entertain. In the twentieth century, the emphasis on narrative has given way to themes of psychological complexity, a shift complemented by new media techniques, mass market distribution, and a renaissance in children's literature. Despite the myriad variations of detail exhibited over several centuries, certain underlying motifs crucial to the tale's survival persist in literature as well as in folklore. Printed versions of "Beauty and the Beast" have permuted as actively as oral variants. An examination of the story's literary development reveals a shaping and reshaping, around a core of basic elements, in response to historical and cultural influences. The following is a comparative analysis of versions in the period 1900 to 1950. It is drawn from a more complete study, *Beauty and the Beast: Visions and Revisions of an Old Tale*, which tracks the story's appearance in folklore, drama, poetry, novel, film, and picture book, from "Cupid and Psyche" to children's books of the 1980s.

Versions of "Beauty and the Beast" spanning the first half of the twentieth century reflect clearly the shock-waves that separated an old era from a new one. A popularized article on the period summarizes:

> The First World War promised to put an end to all wars, but succeeded only in putting an end to Victorian taste, manners, and morals. Sentimentally puritanical novels gave way to mordant, exotic ones; schmaltzy Franz Lehar's melodies bowed to the cynicism of Cole Porter and the syncopation of Gershwin; the soft, undulating curves of art nouveau somehow or other turned into the hard, angular style of art deco; and the notion that duty must take precedence over all other considerations was replaced by a frenetic search for personal fulfillment, regardless of the consequences.[1]

Twentieth-century versions of "Beauty and the Beast" published prior to World War I have a leisurely, entertaining, externalized quality whether child or adult is the intended

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audience. Those immediately following World War I often represent a new kind of separation of the child's world from the adult's, with a segregated literature for the former. Versions after World War II incorporate existential, psychological motifs that turn the story inside out, with Cocteau's film also prefiguring the technological complexities that characterize the post-1950 versions. Throughout this historical buffeting, the literary tale thrives, sometimes in its simplest form, sometimes vastly expanded, but always as recognizable as it seems malleable.

In his preface to *Three Gallant Plays*, Fernand Nozière reflects perfectly the relative lightness characterizing prewar versions.

> In these dramas there is no discussion of anything except love. There is no dealing with the passion that tortures and kills, but merely the delineation of the delicate intoxication. . . . I maintain that it is permissible to feel enthusiasm for measure and moderation.[2]

Fernand Nozière, born Fernand Weyl and introduced to literary circles through articles and dramatic criticism as André Fagel, thrived on romantic dramatizations of old stories. "Beauty and the Beast" was first performed for guests of Comte Robert de Clermont-Tonnerre at Maisons-Lafitte in 1909, by which time Nozière was a well-established figure in French salons for a score of plays such as the other two in *Three Gallant Plays*— "Byzantine Afternoon" ("set at a time when 'costumes were beautiful and morals were low,'" xxv) and "The Slippers of Aphrodite."

The play itself, a "Fantasy in Two acts," is 112 pages long, symmetrically divided into fifty-six pages per act, and set in the oriental palace of Mansour the merchant and in the garden of the Beast. There are nine characters: the Beast, Mansour (rich merchant, seventy), Opal (his oldest daughter, twenty-two), Ruby (his second daughter, twenty), Turquoise (his third daughter, seventeen), the Fairy of Tolerance, Violet (a slave, sixteen), Rock (a young financier, twenty-five), and Yeroum (a young poet, twenty-two). While the characters are representative, they are too vital to be called stereotypical. Each character, to some extent, is made sport of, along with the audience and society at large. The repartee builds up substantial personae. Violet, for instance, the slave who has survived her misfortunes by bartering her beauty, projects her philosophy in a dialogue with the two sisters.

> Only the gods are immaculate, and perhaps their reputation is exaggerated. . . . I was thrown suddenly into wretchedness. Such a plunge often breaks one's conscience, which is a luxurious and fragile trifle. (111)

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The Fairy of Tolerance establishes herself with lightning remarks. When offered refreshment, she savors the sweets and refuses the black bread: "No, I must keep my figure . . . I am the Fairy of Tolerance, not of Exposure" (119). In disbelieving the freshness of the Beast's six-month-old rose for Beauty, the Fairy declares, "Excuse me, but I always doubt any supernatural thing unless I have caused it myself" (124). This Fairy, as a counterpart to the dream comforters or friendly advisers of earlier versions, rather neatly summarizes that role in relation to Beauty, here called Turquoise, who says to her, "When you are near me, I am with myself. You are neither a relative nor a stranger:—you are my soul" (138).

Yeroum and Opal are an amusing couple tellingly sketched. At one point Yeroum complains, "I shall have to relinquish Opal, for I dare not risk being ridiculous. I am a poet" (144). After a long exchange in which the Beast divines that Opal is an artist but cannot guess whether at painting, sculpture, architecture, or music, she declares, "I vibrate . . . . Before sunsets, in the moonlight . . . . My soul dilates" (162-163).

The plot itself goes far in casting an aura of inventive frivolity.

Act I

1. Scene between Opal (widowed from a thick, prosaic merchant named Hassan) and Yeroum discussing the night before, in which she received him as a lover but he spouted only poetry.
2. Enter widowed Ruby and sibarite financier Rock discussing the night before, in which she received him as a lover but he only bedecked her with jewels.
3. Discussion between Opal and Ruby on their unsatisfactory lovers.
4. Enter virginal Turquoise. having observed their widower father's arrival after a year's absence, his ships laden.
5. Enter father, rejuvenated by a beautiful slave, Violet.
6. Conversation among Opal, Ruby, and Violet (after Mansour and Turquoise exit), in which the sisters revile Violet and threaten to drive her away.
7. Fairy of Tolerance appears, persuades the two women to reconcile with Violet.
8. Mansour reappears with Turquoise and gifts as Fairy eats sherbets and sweetmeats. After presenting a necklace to Ruby and a vial of halucinogen to Opal, he gives Turquoise a rose and describes the Beast.
9. The sisters vie to inhale the rose to go in her place to the enchanted garden of the Beast.

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10. Exit Mansour with Violet, Ruby, Opal. Turquoise smells the rose and falls asleep, transported to the garden by "Light and the Seven Colors," who dance a "Ballet of Light."

Act II

1. Turquoise, lying near Fairy, awakens in Beast's garden and observes that a creature's garden reveals his soul; sees Rock and Yeroum and learns that the whole group has sniffed the rose and followed her; seeks solitude in walk with Fairy.
2. Beast appears after her, laments his ugliness, converses with Rock and Yeroum on loving women; agrees to test Ruby's reactions to him.
3. Enter Ruby, who in dialogue with Beast, admits her attraction to him (and his riches).
4. Furious Rock appears to admonish her; she pretends to have seen him spying and played a trick on him with Beast; they reconcile and exit, with Rock excited to slightly more passion.
5. Yeroum and Beast talk till Opal appears, and Yeroum hides to rearrange his imperfect appearance.
6. Opal and Beast talk about "the soul" as she succumbs to his attractions.
7. Yeroum, thunderstruck, comes to reclaim her from such "jesting" with Beast.
8. Enter Mansour, to whom Beast declares his discovery of his own attractions and breaks off engagement with Turquoise, afraid he'll prove a philandering husband.
9. Exit Beast to meditate; enter Violet to converse with Mansour, who reveals (unknowingly) that Turquoise is his only real child, then exits.
10. Enter Beast; Violet shrieks and runs; Turquoise appears and declares her love; the two exit.
11. Fairy appears, hears wail of Turquoise, distressed at the appearance of an ordinary young Prince Charming after her kiss with Beast; others appear.
12. Enter Prince, who insists she accept his second kiss—as a man.
13. Declarations of all and moral.

This is an ingenious situational takeoff on the "Beauty and the Beast" tradition, satirical but light. The theme of relationships between men and women, with sex as the essential ingredient, is really the same as that of Leprince de Beaumont's fairy tale, with the Beast's role as a sexual figure and the women's responses to it made explicitly adult. Unlike the ribald banter of Planché's nineteenth-century play, the style here is witty and more archly sophisticated. The dialogue flows naturally and quickly; the location, scene, and character changes are smooth.

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Mansour's revelation to Violet, for instance, that his first two daughters absorbed, in utero, impressions from their mother's "hearing about" conquests from an officer and refined pleasures from a musician, both "friends of the family" who frequented the house before the girls were born, could have been a distracting aberration from the plot but is so cleverly presented that it contributes to the theme of the play, the naive character of Mansour, and the audience appeal of inclusion into secrets unrevealed to the characters.

There are multiple references to "Beauty and the Beast's" story kin, especially between Turquoise and the Fairy. The wolf "doesn't frighten me," asserts the former. "Little Red Riding Hood was too young to satisfy the wolf's hunger. He wouldn't have eaten me" (135). A moment later, still preparing to meet the Beast, she says "Psyche was sent to meet a furious monster and she met—love. I am like the princess who adores a lion" (136). Vulcan and Venus, Polyphemus and Galatea all get a nod, and the Fairy summarizes for the whole cast of characters at the end:

> To win, you lovers, what you prize
> Use more than speeches, vows, and sighs.
> Zeus who to swan and bull could turn
> Knew very well why women yearn. (186)

There is even a play on the source of the play as well as on the play itself: "And how just one kiss can a man metamorphose / Will be the theme of oceans of verse and bad prose" (186).

Nozière has coupled one of the most profound themes of the fairy tale, the human conflict between body and spirit, with his observations of behavior in his frivolous society and has come up with a telling remark on this new context for an old story. His success in realizing the theme rests on catching the quirks of social behavior. There is never a serious point without its ridiculous counterpoint.

> The Fairy: Little Turquoise, the happiness of humanity is that it is divine in spirit and animal in body. Man is more complete than any god, since he experiences the joys of both intelligence and flesh.
> Violet: Some more sweetmeats? (118)

Later, Turquoise begins to get the drift: "The Beast is approaching. Oh! What Anguish! But how pleasant!" (131). When her kiss transforms the Beast, she is furious. "You should have warned me! Here I was smitten by an exceptional being, and all of a sudden, my fiancé becomes an ordinary distinguished young man" (183).

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Funniest of all is a scene in which Opal tries to explain to the Beast that the physical attraction she feels for him is really the tremors of the soul.

O: Oh, my friend! My friend! You are going to speak of the soul!
B: Oh! The soul, that's what that—
O: Why am I so happy at feeling so feeble in your strong hands? The soul!
B: I understand.
O: I should flee from you—yet I am happy at being rocked in the arms of the beast.
B: The soul!
O: The odor of your fur intoxicates me. It has kept the perfume of the grass where you have slept. A woodland odor—the freshness of thyme and lavender.
B: The soul!
O: It seems as though a faun has pursued me across the country. I could hear behind me the increasing sound of his goat feet. I felt his breath upon my neck. I had no strength to flee. Oh, monster! Monster!
B: My dear soul!
O: Can you comprehend the beauty of these supernatural superior joys?
B: It seems to me that I also have a soul! (165-166)

Even the magic objects are in for a teasing, the emerald ring more symbolic of the bonds of wealth than the bond of love, and imagery echoed in the girls' names, the merchant's ships of the same colors, and Rock's showy adornment of Ruby with his only sign of affection—jewels. The motif of the rose is rendered humorously transparent in a long group discussion full of not-so-oblique descriptions: "Beautifully white, with a heart as pink as a furtive desire .... It looks like some precious tissue .... Drops of dew tremble in the mysterious folds of its corolla" (123-124). Everyone is tremendously drawn to the rose, which is still fresh after six months away from the bush, as it were. Turquoise begs Mansour for a chance to smell it, knowing the perfume will transport her to the Beast's garden.

M: You must not touch it until you know where it comes from.
T: What difference does that make if it charms me!
M: You are my own child. That's exactly what I thought when I first saw Violet. (123)

The year after Nozière's play was first performed, one of the great literary figures of Edwardian times, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, adapted "Beauty and the Beast" from Villeneuve's version for a collection to be illustrated by an artist of equal

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renown, Edmund Dulac. This collaboration produced, with book-making of lavish beauty, a classic of long leisurely retellings, including "The Sleeping Beauty," "Blue Beard," and "Cinderella" (the recurrent coupling of "Beauty and the Beast" with Perrault's stories may account for the frequent assumption that he wrote it). It is interesting to note that two years before, in 1908, Ernest Dowson also published a limited edition (three hundred copies) of a complete English translation—one of the few extant—of Villeneuve's version with four voluptuous color plates by Charles Condor. Neither book mentioned Villeneuve.

Quiller-Couch's adaptation, similar to but longer than Lang's, is an elegantly styled, fifty-six-page story reflecting many of Villeneuve's phrases and descriptions but omitting the long account of Beauty and the Beast's backgrounds. Educated at Oxford, a lecturer in classics there and later appointed King Edward VII Professor of English Literature at Cambridge, Quiller-Couch was a celebrated speaker and anthologist (*The Oxford Book of English Verse*, 1250-1900) who was also one of the most popular writers of his time. One biographical note neatly summarizes the literary polish that distingushes his "Beauty and the Beast." " 'Q' was essentially a romantic. His chief contribution to letters was his clear and apparently effortless style. It reflects the personality of its author—neat, thorough, colourful, unhurried, hospitable, humorous, and chivalrous."[3] His version was, in many ways, the last of its kind.

The cast has been reduced from Villeneuve's to a core of main characters: the merchant, his six sons and six daughters (the youngest, Beauty), the Beast, the Dream Prince, the Dream Lady ("stately," as she is perpetually described) who is the Beast/Prince's mother and a queen. Beauty is a paragon of the three Christian virtues—faith, hope, and love. When her father suspects the Beast of mocking them with gifts too heavy to carry home, his daughter responds with faith.

> "Wait a little," advised Beauty. "That would be a sorry jest, and I cannot help thinking that the Beast is honest; and that since he offered these gifts he will find you also the means to carry them."[4]

Her initial determination to sacrifice herself for her father is coupled with hope. " 'And who knows,' said she, forcing a brave smile, 'but this fate of mine, which seems so terrible, may cover some extraordinary and happy fortune?' " (90). Her capacity for love mirrors Cordelia's. As her sisters beleaguer the merchant with expensive commissions, Beauty makes the singular request: "Dear father," she answered, "I wish for the most precious thing in the world; and that is to see you home again safe and sound" (77).

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Most of all, she is a comparison gainer, her bravery contrasting with her father's weakness (as in Lang's version) and her generosity with her sisters' jealousy. The former is especially apparent in her fearful first encounter with the Beast, from which she recovers after clinging for support to her father (who "was too far terrified to find his voice," 93), walks alone toward her tormentor, and greets him ("but Beauty controlled hers and answered sweetly," 93). Intrinsic to the nature of this courage is her freedom of choice to exercise it, emphasized in a number of passages:

> Whichever you bring must come here of her own free will, or not at all. (84)
>
> Let her be free to choose whether she will come or no; but tell her that, her course once chosen, there can be no retreat, nor even reflection after you have brought her to me. (85)
>
> Have you come here of your own free will? (93)
>
> . . . and since you have come of your own accord, you shall stay. (94)

While none of these heroic characteristics is new to Beauty's depiction, the manner and incidents with which they are developed here seem particularly graceful, as does the Beast's persistent honesty. Similarly, the lucid style and organization of the narrative shed new light on familiar details. The dream sequence, for instance, is presented with more unity of development so as to seem less an intrusion (as it did in Andrew Lang's 1889 adaptation) than a nightly visitation in the ancient husk-myth mode, a connection made clear here in the prince's visionary midnight courtship. The duality of animal/man is rendered especially dramatic in a climactic dream where the prince meets Beast and threatens to kill him for the love of Beauty, who stays his dagger in a test of her love, loyalty, and perception.

Without clutter, Quiller-Couch has also retained some of Villeneuve's palatial elaborations in an orderly but unlabored array. The music room, library, self-lighting candles, garden, sewing room, aviary, and monkey house form a self-contained fantasy world crowned with the "window room," in which each window reveals a new surprise: theatre, opera, fair, promenade, gaming room, royal reception/water picnic/ball, and finally a television-like glimpse of the "whole world."

> State embassies, royal weddings, coronations, pageants, armies, revolutions, sieges, pitched battles—she could sit at her ease and watch them all, which was far more

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> amusing than it is to read about them in a newspaper. (113)

The themes slip through the story with barely a ripple. The father voices his share in Beauty's incapacity to leave home after he euphorically welcomes her return ("as though she had sprung from another world," 120).

> "As for you, my dearest child," said the merchant, "when your sisters are married, you shall keep house for your brothers and me, and so my old age will be happy." (121)

Yet he finally advises her to acquiesce to "these phantoms of your dreams," urging her not to be deceived by appearances, to accept with gratitude the Beast's good heart and marriage proposal. The beginning of Beauty's separation from home comes later in the visit with a phrase neatly unifying the symbolic and concrete: "For one thing distressed her and spoilt all her happiness—she never dreamed at all now" (123). The different levels of reality and fantasy and the nature of magic flash in telling moments, as when Beauty rushes back to the palace only to find herself bored when the Beast does not appear.

> The shows were there as before; but opera and comedy, fête and pageant, held no meaning for her: the players were listless, the music was dull, the processions passed before her eyes but had lost their power to amuse. (125)

There is no magic without love. Neither agate staircases with balusters of carved gold, on the one hand, nor the glow of obligations satisfied, on the other, can account for the joy Beauty feels when she revives her dying Beast. Still, Quiller-Couch cannot resist the opportunity of a moral in rhyme, and two concluding verses recommend maidens to the happiness that repays duty and the satisfactions of helping the wretched.

For the most part, Quiller-Couch's imprint on "Beauty and the Beast" has not been made through character or plot variations but through stylization and emphasis. A few telltale flourishes are a direct inheritance from Villeneuve: "Dinner does not take very long when you are all by yourself" (99, and also in Lang, 119). But many are his own: "Could the horse have felt the weight on the good man's mind, it had never made such a pace" (87). The rose appears with the constancy of a real character, not only with a central role in the request, gift/theft, and penance but also in repeated references that give it palpable presence.

Quiller-Couch's descriptions are simple, swift, and slightly tilted toward the humorous: "The Beast's face turned pale—which, for such a face, was no easy matter" (116). Edmund

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Dulac's six color plates, 5-1/4" x 6-1/2", bordered and framed in the 8-1/2" x 11" pages, pronounce that humor graphically but maintain, at the same time, a serious integrity of craft—a balance similar to that of the text.

Each of the illustrations is captioned with a sentence from the story.

1. He had been fasting for more than twenty-four hours, and lost no time in falling to.
2. The good merchant let drop the rose and flung himself on his knees.
3. Soon they caught sight of the castle in the distance.
4. She found herself face to face with a stately and beautiful lady.
5. These [parrots] no sooner saw Beauty than they began to scream and chatter.
6. Ah! What a fright you have given me! she murmured.

The elaborate costumes and settings are "Moorish," echoing a Victorian graphic trend of fairy tale illustration previously noted and giving this the flavor of an Arabian Nights tale not hinted at in Quiller-Couch's text. The Beast, a human disfigured with animal ears and claws, shows a sense of the grotesque common in Dulac's work. The father's small, rotund figure and foolish expressions not only reduce his dignity in almost every scene but also serve to satirize the other, more romantic effects of the art. While Dulac's watercolor and gouache paintings are often sensual, he has kept the content remarkably discreet for this story, given its implications. Beauty and the Dream Fairy are both as mannered as they are bejeweled. There is a static quality to all the figures belying the action of several dramatic compositions, even the amusing attitude of Beauty holding her ears in defense against an assault by a flamboyant array of parrots.

The influence of Japanese painting on Dulac's landscapes, especially the trees bordering the castle grounds on Beauty's arrival and framing her head as she kneels over the dying Beast, is striking. Suffused colors, made by an overlay production process whereby red, yellow, and blue are used in full strength over each other, produce a soft line that is never truly black.[5] The light, too, is subdued, and the foreground and background are flattened out on a plane. Although Dulac was not born until after Crane and Boyle had illustrated "Beauty and the Beast," his work bears a kinship with them that marks it, like Quiller-Couch's, as the last of a kind. While published for children, Dulac's illustrations are an adult art form, and the jump to Margaret Tarrant's pictures just ten years later unveils a whole new concept of illustrating for children.

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The stage was actually set for condescension by a version of "Beauty and the Beast" that came out the year after the Quiller-Couch/Dulac collection. In 1911, Anna Alice Chapin published *The Now-A-Days Fairy Book*, which was illustrated by Jessie Willcox Smith. Their sentimental story entitled "Beauty and the Beast" bears remote resemblance to the fairy tale. A little girl named Saidie, after purposely losing her toy monkey because it is ugly, feels remorseful enough to rescue it from the hands of some dirty ragamuffins tearing it apart. In the process, her Lady of Colonial Days doll (Mistress Louisa Geraldine Frances Valentina Goodman) is lost, only to reappear magically at a birthday party where it wins first prize in the Doll's Competition of Beauty. The author frequently patronizes children's speech patterns: "'Saidee!' gasped Charming. 'Ve Beast, he does look eggsackly like you!' "[6] Chapin is also the most blatantly stereotypical in defining the female: "Like a great many little girls, she had a few airs and graces, silly ways of tossing her head, and fiddling with her fingers" (p.68). It is Smith's art, however, that is most revealing of the step down to an artifically separated set of emotions reserved for childhood. Her illustration of a little girl's tea party with a demure toy under an idyllic rose-covered trellis in a picket-fenced yard completely defuses the power of the tale. It becomes a coy occasion for play—or an adult's nostalgic view of play—and a visual trendsetter for artists such as Margaret Tarrant, who stick closer to the story but inherit Smith's graphic taste for sweetened juvenile iconography.

Some earlier versions were certainly child conscious. The "Little Plays for Little People" series by Miss Julia Corner and Alfred Crowquill (1854) overdoes rhyming couplets and doll-like figures in its didactic, multi-fairied presentation of "Beauty and the Beast.".Aunt Mary's 1856 version revises Madame de Beaumont's eighteenth-century stone statue punishment of Beauty's siblings for the benefit of penitent young readers:

> Her sisters, after continuing in their mortifying situation several years, were restored by the good fairy to their original shape, and by their conduct fully atoned for their past follies.[7]

Laura E. Richards's retelling, illustrated by Gordon Browne in 1886, is cute and condescending, with Beauty harassed by sisters Gracilia and Superba. A tree narrates the story ("Long, long ago, before there were railways or radishes, and when the moon was still made of green cheese, there lived in the Kingdom of Rigdom Funnidos a rich merchant who had three fair daughters")[8] and is interrupted constantly by some children asking questions. Captain Edric Vredenburg's retelling of "Beauty and the Beast" rivals the Chapin/Smith version for

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saccharinity and stereotyping. He eliminates any element of surprise by beginning the story "Once upon a time, a long while ago, there was a Beast" and assuring readers, before the tale gets under way, that "something very wonderful happened to the Beast and to somebody else."[9] Beauty herself sounds like a housekeeping robot: "Dear me, it was awful, the way those two sisters grumbled, but Beauty, oh dear no, she was all smiles, for her heart was as sunny as ever, as she rolled up the sleeves of her print frock, and cooked the dinner, and scrubbed the floors, and made herself useful, here, there, and everywhere" (64). Of course, "the two sisters turned over a new leaf and were less selfish, and they were happy, so this is a very happy ending to the story" (66). E. Nesbit, while outdoing both Chapin and Vredenberg's sexism ("Beauty, for her part, kept the house clean and pretty, washed, starched, ironed, baked, brewed, and sewed")[10] hews more to a respectfully "adult" tone, in spite of—or perhaps because of—her stature as a children's book writer.

Despite the existence of patronizing precedents and of the historical tension between the aesthetic and the didactic in literature for children, the decade of 1910-20 marked a distinct difference, a shift toward increased compartmentalization of the juvenile. Typical of the trend is Katherine Lee Bates' *Once Upon A Time: A Book of Old-Time Fairy Tales*, illustrated by Margaret Evans Price, who may in 1921 have set a precedent of lionish beasts that dominated the rest of the century. Even more widely distributed than Bates' book, and reissued in 1978, was Margaret Tarrant's work. During the period between the wars, Margaret Tarrant was a children's illustrator especially noted for her pictured nursery rhymes and for *Fairy Tales* (1920), a "collection of the most popular tales by Perrault and the Brothers Grimm"—of which two out of six are by neither. (The public seems determined to give these men a corner on the market.) It is significant that while Crane, Boyle, and Dulac were considered general illustrators who also turned their hands to various art work besides books for children, Tarrant did little else.

Her twenty-page adaptation of "Beauty and the Beast" is based on Beaumont's, with the complete elimination of the dreams and a reduced cast consisting of the Merchant, three sons and three daughters (including Beauty), and the Beast. First readings of this version seem smooth and straight-forward, but a number of touches have subtly reshaped it. The images, tone, and even plot seem in a new way, tamed, even curbed. The textual and graphic evidence for this change is startling.

There is, for instance, just before the merchant loses his way and enters the Beast's castle, a careful reassurance that everything will be all right: "On his return he met with a

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wonderful adventure, which was to have some strange results."[11] The merchant is portrayed not only as loving "his sons and daughters better than his wealth" (69), but also as strong "for, being an upright and honourable man, he had no thought of breaking a promise made even to a Beast" (76). A paragraph is devoted to his feeling that the Beast is more generous than murderous and that Beauty can manage anyone (77-78). The Beast is by turn respectful and pitiful. The term "poor Beast" appears often, at least three times on one page (85). When Beauty cannot revive him by calling and moistening his temples, she pours the whole bowl of water on his head, with instant results.

Beauty, on the other hand, is ingenuous but determined. At the first marriage proposal, which previous Beauties found intimidating at the least, Beauty is undaunted.

> "No, beast," she replied at once in a very decided way; whereupon her suitor gave a great sigh which nearly blew out the candles, and retired, looking very doleful. (81)

The only time she falters, at their first meeting ("he had *such* a mouth, and two such ugly teeth came right over his lower jaw!"), Beauty is immediately reassured: "You are a good girl. I am much obliged to you" (79).

There is no dream comforter/adviser/chorus here because none is needed. A last-minute fairy appears at the wedding to still the sisters' spiteful remarks by turning them into statues. "For all we know they are there still, for they were certainly very disagreeable people" (88).

Even the details of setting are toned down to a limited scale, the castle grounds reduced to a well-manicured lawn:

> In the garden also everything was in first-rate order. The flower-beds were full of beautiful plants, the walks clean and hard, the grass-plots soft and smooth as velvet carpets. (74)

In fact, when Beauty and her father approached,

> the two travellers could not help feeling a little comforted by the beauty of the scene; and the nearer they came to the Beast's palace, the fresher became the greenery, and the thicker the throng of chirping birds. (78)

Even Beauty's suite is telescoped to modest proportions.

> She timidly opened the door and found herself in a large room, beautifully furnished, with bookcases, sofas, pictures, and a guitar and other musical instruments. (80)

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The word comforted or comforting appears twice in the paragraphs following this description and frequently on other pages. Throughout, the expository prose maintains a comfortable, matter-of-fact tone as neat as the lawn.

> By working hard, morning, noon, and night, the merchant and his sons were fortunate to earn enough to keep them from want. In fact, in one respect the merchant was better off, for whereas, during the time of his prosperity, he had often been kept awake at night by anxious thoughts for the safety of his ships, his warehouses, and his stores of gold and silver, such thoughts now never entered his mind, and he slept soundly and peacefully until morning. Also his conscience was clear, for he had always been honourable in his dealings, and, though everyone knew of his misfortunes, he was still respected by all whose respect was worth having. (70)

Later, the magic mirror does show him pining for Beauty, but the very explanation of grief or apprehension in any character seems to moderate the emotion: "So, you see, the merchant was rather dull and lonely" (83).

Tarrant's three full-page illustrations also modify the images from powerful to charming. The Beast has lost his strength and become a toy of the nursery room; perhaps a lovely toy, but not as meaningful. He is more pitiable and cuddly than ugly or terrifying. The first scene, in which he appears to the merchant, shows light-weight cartooned caricatures with "play-pretend" medieval costumes and castle. The colors run to pink, blue, lavender, and pale green.

The second picture shows a composition similar to Boyle's dinner scene, but here the Beast is more ludicrous than anything else. In contrast to the sad dignity of that earlier jet black sea creature's head, its tiny animal eyes, and its long curving tusks, Tarrant's monster needs only its bangs trimmed to be the perfect pet. Beauty has acquired the good looks of her creator's society, a kind of sunshine-apricot-advertisement wholesomeness that appears even more pronounced against the frame of intense blue, which adds some depth to the background.

The touches of Art Deco in the last scene of Beauty lamenting the prostrate Beast are striking. The costume and the composition are more elegantly designed than in the first two scenes. But still, the figure crumpled on the ground is more pathetic than tragic, with its hand covering its face in the gesture of a child hiding. Beauty's pose itself is more ladylike than distraught. Beauty's one genuine cry of anguish after the handsome young prince appears to say "'Thank you, Beauty' and . . . all sorts of sweet and tender things" (87) might be applied to Tarrant's own gentling transformation of the tale for

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the protection of children: "But where is Beast? I do not know you. I want my beast, my lovely Beast!" (87).

Whereas Tarrant's work confines the images of the story to a juvenile realm, John Heath-Stubbs' poetry, published in a collection entitled *Beauty and the Beast* in 1943, abstracts the images beyond children's reach. With few exceptions, the versions following this period are created by writers and artists who produce for either children or adults, but not both. In spite of the ideal of a continuum of quality, based on the theory that every age group finds a level of satisfaction in well-wrought art, the specialization of the artist in one age group has an effect on his or her work. While earlier versions of "Beauty and the Beast" may have been clearly aimed at one audience or another, the fact that their creators did work in both areas seems to have enriched them with a kind of crossover awareness of the balance between simplicity and sophistication.

Heath-Stubbs' fifty-eight-line unrhymed lyric poem in eight stanzas extracts the tone and images of the story in order to beam an existential spotlight on the two main characters. The setting is the Beast's garden, with the inevitable implications of the primal biblical drama enacted between animal, woman, and man. There is no action or even dialogue, but four alternate monologues: her two comprising three short stanzas to each section; his two, one long verse per section. The metric variations of rhythm and line length distinguish their voices: hers, clipped and clear; his, uncurbed and blusterous.

Beauty and the Beast

Beauty

My silver flesh is sifted out
  For one red rose
And my gay beauty sold—perhaps—
  For a beast to play with, for
  A crump pad-paw;
Not for dromedaries sweating
  Under fiery stones,
Or the white mules bunched with bales of stuff-silk—
Only the petals plucked, the powdered anthers'
  Upward curving.

Here in this garden
The birds are singing
  For pride.
I walk at noon
Between the roses
Of this close garden.
  I am learning.

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The Beast

O soul thrust through the thick flesh, spirit whelmed
In black-blood tides! O sharp spark all but quenched
In soft numb sponginess of a beast's brain!
My shagg'd sides torn in the thickets, hands made clumsy
And blunt with earthnut-grubbing; yellow teeth
That have known red flesh! These uninhabited
Grounds and gardens, once my pleasant places,
Have heard through the long nights my baffled bellow,
My wet mouth coughing and snorting to the moon!
I am the evil hermit of this fastness,
Lurking for travellers among the trees;
By force and fraud now have I captured Beauty;
Not to rend, but bend to pity
I am learning.

Beauty

Here in this garden
I am learning
The rose encloses
A sharp secret.

I have a fishing line
That will not break—
A smooth skein of silk,
And a steel chain:
I will drag out the drowned image
From the troubled water of your eyes.

Groped I for a rose
And grasped a thorn?
I have found a fire
Asleep in the ashes;
I will teach the flame
To make clay hard and brittle.

The Beast

I am learning to turn from the wet mistiness
Of Spring, among the fallen leaves, and the roots
Of rough-barked trees, where I howled to the cold
Full moon, a hairy female flank wanting;
I am haunting in secret the paths of this closed garden;
Heavy with roses, shrill with incessant bird-song,
Where she walks, with her white foot hardly stirring
The live green grass. My flesh is twisted and tortured
With sharp writhings of my awakening spirit—
O soul like a stream of lava, cleaving through
The uncouthness of clay, assoil the soiled flesh![12]

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In the first section, Beauty laments she has been sold as a creature's plaything, not for the high price of precious goods but for one rose. Secluded in a garden, humbled even before birds, she is learning. In the second section, the Beast discovers a soul awakening in his body; he, too, is learning. In the third, Beauty learns that the rose is more than it appears; she will save the Beast's soul and civilize the flesh. In the last, the Beast begins to learn of a soul absolved, the flesh set free. The common bond, "I am learning," unites them, but Beauty learns of a natural force, the rose's sharp secret, sexual flowering; the Beast learns feeling within physicality.

Their different reflections of the same garden are especially telling in parallel lines 11-16 and 52-53. She walks at noon, with birds singing for pride, between roses, in a *close*, or intimate space. He haunts at night the secret paths of a *closed*, or shut, space, feels the roses as heavy, the incessant birdsong shrill. They learn by reaction to each other.

A consideration of Heath-Stubbs' diction benefits from historical references cited in the Oxford English Dictionary. The simple opening verb "sift," for example, not only means sieved to separate the coarse from the fine—something Beauty thinks has been applied to her but ironically finds she will apply to the Beast—but echoes with older meanings of measurement, putting a person on trial, scrutinizing narrowly to find out the truth by close inquiry. The word "crump" in line 5 not only means crooked or deformed, but also, in its verb form, to bend (echoed in line 30) and, amazingly, to eat with a dull sound. "Assoil" is a term with religious, political, and physical overtones: to absolve from sin, pardon, forgive, or even set free from excommunication; to discharge, release, acquit, clear of criminal charge; to deliver, set free, purge; to atone, expiate. A gloss of the poem reveals antique touches in word choice that project the scenario back in time and underscore the story's symbolism.

The imagery is resonant with color, but in addition to the obvious contrast of silver flesh, white mules, and white foot with reds of rose, blood, spark, flesh, fire, and lava, there is also a strong textural play. *Tides*, *quenched*, *sponginess*, *wet mouth*, *smooth skein of silk*, *drowned*, *water*, *mistiness*, and *stream* all find a foil in the *anther's upward curving*, *sharp spark*, *sharp secret*, *line*, *steel chain*, *thorn*, *clay hard and brittle*, *rough-barked*. The firing of clay (into pottery, a mark of civilization) signifies the transformation of animality, the duality resolved and working. Stripped of narrative devices, this telling is nonetheless powerful. While reducing the story to its simplest point, Heath-Stubbs retains important images and projects elemental voices.

Not only has the story's kernel been exposed, but also its characters' internal conflicts and motivations. The characters speak directly, for themselves, and introspectively, of them-

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selves. The growing prevalence of psychological interpretation during the first half of the twentieth century has affected the story's recreators, who explicitly explore in art forms the fairy tale motifs which their scientific colleagues analyse.

The final version of this period demonstrates most clearly how the story turns inward. About Jean Cocteau's "Beauty and the Beast," released just three years after Heath-Stubbs' poem, Jean Decock wrote, "The preoccupation of the film with an abundance of signs and objects draws our attention to the unconscious."[13] Not only do the film footage and two-hundred-page shooting script extend the possibilities for probing beneath the story's surface, but Cocteau's diary of the filming probes into his own experience of recreating the story.

This elaborate artistic display and documentation could have overwhelmed the story even more than Heath-Stubbs's abbreviation risked hollowing it, but Cocteau forged an intense inner vision that he protected fiercely from banal effects. The defense of his purity against technical problems—post-war black-outs, lack of photographic equipment and supplies, health problems of the cast, four-hour makeup jobs per scene, airplanes buzzing the set, impossible weather conditions, uncooperative chickens, and much more—adds yet another level of reality to the storytelling.

Cocteau's film has now become a classic, shown often in fine arts theatres and rerun regularly on public television. At the time it came out, however, it shocked a population devastated by World War II with its focus on what seemed of slight importance—a fairy tale—compared to the harsh realities of survival. Yet Cocteau was dealing with survival—even revival—of the spirit, and his rendition of "Beauty and the Beast" as a movie explored new possibilities both for the story and for the medium he used to tell it.

In the tradition of fantasists from E. T. A. Hoffmann to Jorge Luis Borges, Cocteau is obsessed with levels of reality, labyrinths, mirrors, dreams, surrealistic images, all of which blend naturally with and extend easily beyond the traditional story of "Beauty and the Beast." Time and space take unexpected turns in the film; light and dark, surfaces and depths play on one another. Yet throughout, Cocteau emphasizes the importance of the ordinary to the sphere of the extraordinary. He exacts of narrative and photography the "clean sculptured line"[14] of true poetry, which he contrasts with popular contemporary "diffuse lighting and the use of gauzes" for fuzzy, sentimental effects (65). At one point, he compliments his cameraman for achieving "a supernatural quality within the limits of realism. It is the reality of childhood. Fairyland without fairies. Fairyland in the kitchen" (97). Writing the script with "only a short sentence or a few lines" to every shot (27), he encouraged the actors to follow the

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narrative thread as simply as possible, "stripped of complicated gesticulation and clutter" (32) for an overall "slow rhythm without real drama" (120).

Several times, the film became "too beautiful . . . too artistic" (55), a direction Cocteau tempered with harsher contrasts. He avoided moving the camera, kept to still shots, reduced the picturesque, sharpened precision (14, 19, 31).

> We recorded the sound of the arrows. As always the real sound was false. We had to translate it, invent a sound more exact than the sound itself. (31)

He awakens from a nap after an exhausting morning take: "I had been dreaming and jumping with both feet into a reality that is more real than my dream" (31). He cites the work of Vermeer and Gustav Doré as his inspiration, refers often to Perrault, reflects on the nature of myth and his translation of it.

> Fantasy has its own laws which are like those of perspective. You may not bring what is distant into the foreground, or render fuzzily what is near. The vanishing lines are impeccable and the orchestration so delicate that the slightest false note jars. (5-6)

Several passages reveal the extent of Cocteau's identification with "Beauty and the Beast" as it personifies his own beliefs.

> I chose that particular fable because it corresponded to my personal mythology. (viii)
>
> Gradually I am coaxing my myths and childhood memories back again. (60)
>
> The movie screen is the true mirror reflecting the flesh and blood of my dreams. (69)
>
> My work is that of an archeologist. The film exists (preexists). I have to unearth it from the shadow where it sleeps, with a pick and shovel. Sometimes I spoil it by being too hasty. But the fragments left intact shine with the beauty of marble. (57).

The film itself is so well integrated that its visual and verbal images constantly extend each other. The first time we catch sight of the sisters, for instance, one is admiring herself in a hand mirror while Beauty kneels away from the camera to tie the vain girl's shoe. In the first close-up of Beauty—scrubbing on her knees—"we see her face appear as a reflection in the floor."[15] In the Beast's palace, Beauty's mirror speaks to her: "I am your mirror, Beauty. Reflect for me. I will reflect for you" (134). When the sisters look into the same mirror, one sees

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herself grown old and ugly, the other sees a monkey. When the first asks the second what she has seen, the monkey mouths, "Nothing" (332). (Monkeys appear in illustrations by Crane and Boyle, too, as "aping" the vanity of appearances.) Later, the sisters hurl the mirror at Beauty with the accusation, "It will show you what a Beauty will become in order to please a Beast" (334). Beauty must learn to believe not what she sees, but what she feels. The Beast must learn to bear her seeing. Over and over he admonishes her not to look at him. Her looking first frightens but finally saves him.

The theme of deceptive appearances gets frequent comment in the script as well. The least perceptive of the characters says, "I don't believe in magic powers. The monster lulls Beauty to sleep and makes her see what he pleases" (282). One sister remarks enviously on Beauty's prospect of marrying a wealthy suitor, even a beastly one, "There are a lot of other husbands that have beards and horns" (276). In an exchange between Beauty and the Beast, he confesses, "Aside from being ugly, I have no wit," which Beauty inverts: "You have the wit to be aware of this" (150). Beauty's revelation at the end—"I was the monster, my Beast"—climaxes the many reversals explored in both picture and dialogue.

Of course the ultimate contradiction is the appearance of the prince. "The Beast is no more. I was he" (372). But there are more playful reminders of the contradictions of human behavior. When the prince asks her if his looks displease her, she replies "Yes . . . No" (376). Later he asks "You're happy?" to which Beauty responds, "I'll have to get used to this" (378). As he prepares to fly away with her, she says "I like to be afraid . . . with you" (380). Beauty's brother at one point says, "I'm not afraid. I'm thinking," to which his friend replies "That's the same thing" (354). And to the ironies of the traditional plot, Cocteau adds his own twists. The sisters whom Beauty dresses in the film "will carry the train" of her dress (383). The suitor who shoots an arrow in the opening scene is shot with an arrow in the conclusion.

The characters have been increased by one important addition, Avenant, a friend of Beauty's brother and a would-be suitor. Representing man's bestial nature in contrast to the Beast's natural bestiality, the human Avenant extends the duality of Beast and prince to a trinity. The prince, of course, supersedes both the other characters but is played by the same actor, clarifying the roles as three aspects of one personality. Others in the cast are named but maintain a fine balance between archetypal anonymity and convincing human traits.

Beast, Avenant, Prince	Jean Marais
Beauty	Josette Day

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Merchant	Marcel André
Adélaïde (1st sister)	Mila Parely
Félicie (2nd sister)	Nane Germon
Ludovic (brother)	Michel Auclair
Magnifique (the horse)	

The action adheres surprisingly to the traditional plot, given a film's dependence on action and dialogue and Cocteau's conscious limitations on the latter. Although unafraid of pauses in pacing for a timeless quality, he has insisted on a strong narrative line, often editing out distractions included in the original filming, such as scenes of Ludovic and Avenant in their gambling excesses and the deception of a draper to whom they attempt to marry one of their sisters (for a modest fee). The narrative suits Cocteau's determination to experiment with ideas through classical techniques and structure as a means of reducing distractions for the audience considering those ideas. One entry in the diary substantiates this.

> In the rest of the film (to be done at the studio) I will supply the movement and detail—but I suspect that the rhythm of the film resides in me more than in the mobility of the camera or of the protagonists. Perhaps I won't be able to do very much in the face of a mechanism which will only come to realization in the cutting-room. The main thing is to add one fact to another, to interest the spectator instead of distracting him. (*Diary*, p. 33)

The story unfolds basically in two settings, a provincial farm at Rochecorbon, which Cocteau found just before concluding he would have to build a set; and a chateau with outdoor scenes in several parks.

1. Quarrel between sisters and boys (crossbow scene)
2. Encounter between Avenant and Beauty (scrubbing floor on sisters' orders)
3. Merchant enters with good news of a cargo ship returned
4. Humiliation of sisters on a visit to duchess, spite on return home, family dissension
5. Merchant leaves, Beauty's request for rose
6. Ludovic petitions money-lender
7. Lawyer turns father out at night after creditors claim ship
8. Merchant lost in storm, arrives at chateau
9. Drinks and sleeps, finds horse missing and dead deer, picks rose
10. Beast appears, condemns him to die in quarter hour—or bring daughter in his place within three days
11. Gives horse (Magnifique) for transport

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12. Roses presented to Beauty with father's story; quarreling among children
13. Beauty sneaks away to palace
14. Finds room, mirror; panics, tries to flee, meets Beast, faints
15. Beast carries her to bed, speaks
16. Dining scene, with conversation and proposal
17. Night fear: Beauty hears animal cry, hides; Beast comes into her room, she orders him out
18. Morning, she sees Beast drinking; evening, walks with him as he struggles not to chase deer
19. Another walk, she lets him drink from her hands
20. He comes to her room, bloody, after a hunt; Beauty confronts and closes him out (fig. 14)
21. Removal of merchant's furniture as Avenant and Ludovic play chess
22. Beauty begs leave to go home for a week, Beast flees in anguish
23. Scenes of Avenant and Ludovic's excesses and deception of draper (mostly cut)
24. Beauty sees father in mirror, becomes ill; Beast makes her swear to return in one week
25. Beauty leaves, Beast faints on her bed
26. Father/Beauty reunion
27. Sisters and boys quarrel as they hang out sheets, see Beauty in gown and father recovered
28. Beauty's pearls turn to burned rope when she tries to give them away
29. Discussion about Beast between father and Beauty
30. Sisters plot; brother and friend wheedle Beast's secret
31. Tavern scene when brother and friend plot; sisters rub eyes with onion
32. Father/Beauty discuss on last day; sisters beg and persuade her to stay; steal key
33. Sisters torment her, Avenant presses her, father is dismayed
34. Beast despairs
35. Sisters and boys meet to conspire at night in stable; horse appears with sack containing mirror
36. Boys leave on horse; Adélaïde sees herself as old woman in mirror, Félicie as monkey; they take mirror to Beauty
37. She sees Beast weeping, puts on glove to get back to castle; returns home for key; mirror breaks; she returns to castle
38. Beauty searches for Beast; finds him dying
39. Avenant and Ludovic break into Diana's lodge

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40. Beauty cries over Beast, promises to be his wife; declares love
41. Statue shoots Avenant, turns to Beast; Ludovic falls to his death
42. Prince Ardent takes her away in magic cloak to kingdom

Because Cocteau took such care with the mundane details of sheets flapping in the wind or chickens clucking from the coach house, the marvelous objects he multiplies do not seem overwhelming. The mirror, the key to the pavilion, the glove that transports Beauty back and forth, the pearl necklace burning Felicie's hand, Beauty's tear turned diamond, the statue of Diana shooting Avenant, the flight in the cloak, and the statues following every human move with their knowing eyes and waving their arms to light the way with torches simply document the story's straightforward progress. The rose itself, the most powerful of the symbols, remains a rose, juxtaposed most dramatically in one long shot with a burning candle, the two signs of passion.

As memorable as any of the actual pictorial content is the varied quality of light in the film. At times it gleams "like a piece of old silver which has been polished till it shines like new" (*Diary*, 21). For some sequences, Cocteau waited for the sky to become overcast with clouds – "they give the light the elegance of pearl" (*Diary*, 35). What he has done in black and white makes later technicolor efforts seem dull. His was a deliberate attempt to cast new light, literally and figuratively, on an old story. His success in commanding new techniques to reveal timeless truths and in choreographing technicians affecting camera work, music, set and costume design, properties, production management, wardrobe, makeup, editing, sound engineering, script continuity, lighting, sets, production, business management, and special sound effects (a crew of secondary storytellers who could make or break his vision of the film) assures his *Beauty and the Beast* a transition of integrity into an age of technology and sets a standard for new versions of the future.

The period of 1900-1950 represents a transition into ever more, and more varied, versions of "Beauty and the Beast." Each version featured here stands for many others that are like it but less impressive: the 1910 Quiller-Couch/Dulac collection, for instance, is echoed in the early 1920s *Classic Fairy Tales* illustrated by W. Heath Robinson and in the early 1930s *Arthur Rackham Fairy Book*, both well-known, traditional, and less distinguished in text and illustration of "Beauty and the Beast" than Quiller-Couch/Dulac's. Tarrant's 1920 book typifies any number of cozied-up versions, including the 1942 *Tenggren Tell-It-Again Book*, with its pitiful, cuddly troll Beast.

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Along with the number of editions must be considered the impact of each type. Popular collections, for instance, have widespread influence on a large audience of children, though perhaps not the eventual power of one film classic such as Cocteau's. Nozière's and Heath-Stubbs' works, however, are a better barometer of the tale's cultural and artistic standing: They affect a small circle of people but reflect how deeply entrenched is the tale as a basis for development of certain images and motifs, which leads to great aesthetic diversity.

Whereas in earlier centuries, the unconventional version was an aberration, in the 1900s the story becomes multi-traditional. The variety in these five examples is only a beginning. Although innovative figures such as Cocteau may respect tradition, they nevertheless play with characterization and action, project new patterns of narrative voice, and experiment with graphic media. What becomes more and more apparent amidst these individualistic literary and visual elaborations is the stability of the central characters, narrative structure, and images, objects, and symbols—the still, small voice of the story that seems to outstay shifts in dramatic action and personae.

Notably absent from even conventional versions of the 1900-1950 period is a heavy emphasis on moralizing. Nozière spoofed it, Heath-Stubbs and Cocteau spurned it, Tarrant neglected it, and Quiller-Couch tacked it on in what seemed an effort to recapture the fashion of the old days. Quiller-Couch's is also the only instructive fairy godmother figure. It is nevertheless clear that Nozière, Heath-Stubbs, and Cocteau are abstracting messages from art and entertainment, whether or not those messages are didactic. Their overt preoccupation with meaning, balanced as it may be with a sense of aesthetic conventions, is a new stage in the development of "Beauty and the Beast."

The deception of appearances becomes not a homily but an existential recognition. Perception replaces obedience, and understanding supersedes advice as an ideal in the maturation process. The transition away from didacticism to thematic interpretation during this time is slightly different from the later psychological investigation of the story. These writers and artists, mostly male as in the nineteenth century, dwell not so much on the Oedipal triangle or archetypal patterns of a collective subconscious as on the struggle of the individual to achieve a balance within him- or herself and with another, or by extension of the other, with a larger framework of family and society. The story represents personal dualities of light and dark, reality and fantasy, animal and spiritual, male and female, alienation and reconciliation.

This search for and awareness of meaning unfortunately deepens the split between adult and child audiences. As writers

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and artists specialize and invest in a separate world of childhood and children's books, their treatment of the tale often assumes an artificial veneer intolerable to adults. At the same time, the adult exploration of paradox, mazes, mirror images, and other sophisticated elements suggested by the story signifies little to children. It has probably captured their attention no more than did earlier expositions on morality. What is most important to the story's internalization is its external clarity; those who perceive its intrinsic metaphorical strength have achieved the greatest understanding of it.

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14. Jean Cocteau, *Beauty and the Beast: Diary of a Film* (New York: Dover Publications, 1972), 65. Page numbers after the following quotations refer to this edition of Cocteau's diary during the filming of "Beauty and the Beast."

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Story Born

Brute, My mother teases him,
and he rushes us with a roar.
Napping in her lap has left me warm.
Rosey, he calls her, and spills
petals over her head by dozens,
covering me with the scent, hers.
His is sharper, a pungent huntsman
smell still with him after walking wild
in the woods. He takes no one with him
but stalks restless in the wind,
returning softened to our garden, laden
with roses, resting his head on her arm
and holding my short shoulders
against his own. I am flowers and thorn,
born of Beauty and the Beast, and torn,
sometimes, between their sweet and sharp,
between heart-sure and head-fair. Where
is happily ever after, here or there?
The castle is secure, yet leaving it,
alluring. What enchantment keeps me
restless by day but scared of the dark?
Hold my hands and walk me to the park.

Betsy Hearne

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